

Request for Proposal

Contract Lifecycle Management (CLM) Software — 2026/27 Procurement Cycle

[YOUR COMPANY NAME]

Issuing department: _____

RFP reference number: _____

Issue date: _____

Proposal deadline: _____

Primary contact (name, email): _____

1. Introduction & Purpose

[Your Company Name] ("the Company") is issuing this Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify and select a contract lifecycle management (CLM) platform to support our legal, sales, procurement, HR and finance teams in creating, negotiating, signing, storing and managing contracts.

This RFP is designed for a 2026/27 buying cycle in which contracting software has moved well beyond static repositories and e-signature. Vendors are now expected to demonstrate genuine AI-native capability — including agentic workflows, natural-language contract drafting and review, and audit-ready AI governance — rather than AI features bolted onto a legacy document management core. This template reflects that shift and asks vendors to substantiate claims with specifics, not marketing language.

Guidance for buyer: replace all bracketed placeholders, delete sections that don't apply, and adjust weightings in Section 6 to reflect your organisation's priorities before distributing.

2. Background & Current State

- Approximate contract volume per month/year: []
- Current method of managing contracts (shared drives, email, legacy CLM, point solutions): []
- Departments that will use the platform (legal, sales, procurement, HR, finance, other): []
- Number of named users vs. people who need occasional/self-serve access: []
- Key pain points with current process: []
- Existing tech stack the CLM must work alongside (CRM, HRIS, ERP, e-signature, Slack/Teams, Word): []

3. Objectives & Success Criteria

- Reduce average contract turnaround time from first draft to signature.
- Give business teams (sales, HR, procurement) a self-serve way to generate and manage low-risk paper without routing everything through legal.
- Create a single, structured, searchable source of truth for all contracts and their key terms, obligations and renewal dates.
- Apply AI to reduce manual review and data-entry work, with clear guardrails and an audit trail suitable for internal and external scrutiny.
- Achieve a live, adopted platform within one quarter of contract signature — not a multi-quarter implementation project.
- Keep total cost of ownership predictable, without hidden per-document or per-AI-query charges.

4. Scope of Requirements

- Contract creation from structured, business-owner-editable templates (no dependency on IT or professional services).
- Real-time collaborative negotiation and redlining, viewable by counterparties without requiring a paid licence.
- Configurable, no-code approval workflows that route by contract type, value or risk.
- Native or tightly integrated e-signature.
- A structured, AI-searchable contract repository with automatic metadata extraction from new and legacy/imported contracts.
- Proactive tracking of obligations, renewal and termination dates, with automated alerts to the right owner.
- AI-assisted drafting, summarisation, question-answering and risk/deviation flagging against an approved playbook.
- Reporting and dashboards for legal, finance and procurement stakeholders.
- Role-based permissions and a full audit trail of every action and AI-generated recommendation.

5. Vendor Questionnaire

Vendors should respond to every question below with specifics rather than general statements of capability.

5.1 Company Overview & Stability

#	Question	Priority
1	How long has your CLM product been generally available, and how many customers use it in production?	Important

#	Question	Priority
2	Describe your target customer profile — enterprise legal departments, or also lean legal teams supporting a fast-growing mid-sized business?	Important
3	What is your product roadmap for the next 12 months, specifically regarding AI and agentic capability?	Important
4	Provide details of your financial stability and any relevant customer churn/retention metrics.	Nice-to-have

5.2 Implementation & Time-to-Value

#	Question	Priority
1	What is your typical implementation timeline from contract signature to a live, adopted platform, for an organisation of our size?	Must-have
2	Does implementation require professional services, internal IT/engineering resource, or a configuration partner? Itemise cost.	Must-have
3	Can business users (not IT or legal engineers) build and edit their own templates and workflows without developer involvement?	Must-have
4	Describe onboarding and change-management support, including training format and time commitment required from our team.	Important

#	Question	Priority
5	What does migration of our existing repository (including unstructured legacy documents) involve, and what AI-assisted extraction accelerates this?	Important

5.3 Core Platform & Usability

#	Question	Priority
1	Describe the editing experience for drafting/redlining in real time with an external counterparty. Does the counterparty need a paid account?	Must-have
2	Can workflows, approval chains and templates be configured without code by a business admin, and how quickly can a new template be published?	Must-have
3	How does your platform support drafting and review directly within Microsoft Word, if at all?	Important
4	Describe your mobile and browser experience for approvals and e-signature.	Nice-to-have
5	What structured data is automatically captured at signature (parties, value, term, renewal notice, key obligations) without manual tagging?	Must-have

5.4 AI & Agentic Capabilities

2026 buyers should ask vendors to distinguish clearly between (a) AI copilots that answer when prompted, and (b) autonomous agents that act without a prompt, and whether each feature is generally available, in beta, or on the roadmap.

#	Question	Priority
1	Which AI capabilities are generally available today (not beta/roadmap) for drafting, summarisation, clause/risk extraction, and playbook-based redlining?	Must-have
2	Do you offer autonomous/agentic capability (e.g. proactively flagging a renewal, drafting a first-pass redline, triggering a workflow without being asked)? What is live vs. beta, and what guardrails exist?	Important
3	Is your AI trained/fine-tuned on our own data, and can we control that? Is any of our data used to train models shared across other customers?	Must-have
4	Do you support external AI tools (e.g. via MCP or an equivalent open protocol) querying contract data with permissions and logging?	Nice-to-have
5	What audit trail exists for AI-generated suggestions, redlines or extracted data — can we see what was recommended, what a human approved or overrode, and when?	Must-have
6	Is AI functionality included in core pricing, or a metered/paid add-on? If metered, on what basis?	Must-have

5.5 Workflow, Collaboration & Post-Signature Management

#	Question	Priority
1	Describe how approval routing can vary by contract type, value threshold or risk level, and how exceptions are handled.	Important
2	How does the platform track obligations and key dates after signature, and how are reminders routed to the correct business owner (not just legal)?	Must-have
3	What reporting/dashboard capability is available out of the box for legal, finance and procurement, without custom BI work?	Important
4	How are amendments, renewals and order forms linked back to the original agreement?	Important

5.6 Integrations & Extensibility

#	Question	Priority
1	List native integrations with CRM, e-signature, HRIS, ERP, and collaboration tools (Slack, Microsoft Teams).	Important
2	Is a documented, stable API available, and under what licensing terms?	Important
3	Can a business user create a request-to-contract workflow from within their existing	Important

#	Question	Priority
	CRM/helpdesk without legal involvement for standard paper?	

5.7 Security, Compliance & AI Governance

#	Question	Priority
1	What security certifications do you hold (e.g. SOC 2 Type II, ISO 27001)?	Must-have
2	Where is data hosted/processed, and what data residency options exist (e.g. EU/UK hosting for GDPR)?	Must-have
3	Describe your AI governance framework — how are AI outputs explainable, auditable, and bounded by defined guardrails?	Important
4	What is your approach to sub-processors and fourth-party AI model providers, and is this disclosed in your DPA?	Important
5	Describe your incident response process and uptime/SLA performance over the last 12 months.	Important

5.8 Commercial Terms & Pricing

#	Question	Priority
1	Provide a full pricing structure, including charges based on users, contract volume, storage, AI usage, or integrations. Identify anything excluded from the headline price.	Must-have

#	Question	Priority
2	What is the minimum contract term, and terms for scaling users/usage up or down?	Important
3	Is there a difference in price or feature availability between a pilot and full enterprise rollout?	Important
4	What would the total first-year cost be for [X] users and [Y] contracts/month, itemised by licence, implementation, and AI/add-on fees?	Must-have

5.9 Support & Customer Success

#	Question	Priority
1	What support channels and SLAs are included as standard, vs. an upgraded tier?	Important
2	Will we have a named customer success contact, and what is the standard post-launch check-in cadence?	Nice-to-have
3	How do you gather and act on product feedback from customers of our size?	Nice-to-have

5.10 References & Proof Points

#	Question	Priority
1	Provide two to three reference customers of comparable size/industry who can speak to implementation speed and usability.	Important

#	Question	Priority
2	Provide a case study or metric evidencing reduction in contract turnaround time or legal team workload.	Important

6. Evaluation Criteria & Weighting

Suggested weightings for a 2026/27 mid-market buyer, reflecting the shift toward speed of deployment, business-user usability and AI capability that is genuinely native — alongside the governance needed to trust it. Adjust before distributing.

Evaluation Category	Weighting	Vendor Score (1–5)	Weighted Score
Time-to-value & implementation speed			
Ease of use & business-user self-serve			
Native AI capability (drafting, extraction, agentic workflows)			
AI governance, auditability & data security			
Core CLM functionality (repository, workflow, e-signature)			
Integrations & extensibility			
Pricing transparency & total cost of ownership			
Vendor support & customer success model			

Evaluation Category	Weighting	Vendor Score (1–5)	Weighted Score
TOTAL	100%		

Score each vendor 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent) per category. Multiply by the weighting to calculate a weighted score, and sum for a total.

7. Submission Instructions & Timeline

- Proposal deadline: []
- Format: Written response to Section 5 in the format provided, plus a live demonstration if shortlisted.
- Questions during the RFP period should be directed to: []
- Shortlisted vendors will be invited to a demo and reference call stage by: []
- Final decision and contract signature targeted for: []

Thank you for your proposal. All vendor responses will be evaluated on a consistent basis using the criteria set out in Section 6.